



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ROGER BERLINER  
COUNCIL VICE PRESIDENT

CHAIR, TRANSPORTATION, INFRASTRUCTURE,  
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

August 25, 2011

Mr. Isiah Leggett  
County Executive  
101 Monroe Street  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear County ~~Executive~~ <sup>Ike</sup> Leggett,

I am writing to request your support to expand our County's commitment to a robust bikeshare program, including, but not limited to, the Bethesda metro stations.

You may be aware of the growing interest in establishing a bikeshare program in the Bethesda area of our County. The District of Columbia and Arlington launched their bikeshare programs one year ago to great fanfare, and they have experienced tremendous growth in participation since their start in September 2010. Indeed, just last month the District's Department of Transportation announced the addition of 32 new stations, and Arlington added four new stations this past April.

I was pleased to learn that our County, in partnership with the City of Rockville, secured a grant from the National Transportation Planning Board to establish a bikesharing pilot in Rockville and Gaithersburg to provide linkages to home and employment sites for low-income residents. This is a positive development and your staff is to be commended for their hard work in securing this grant.

However, I believe you would agree that Montgomery County can – and should – do more to provide bikesharing to our residents. I am grateful that your staff at the Montgomery County Department of Transportation pursued funding to bring a bikeshare system to our county through federal TIGER grants. However, the fact remains that Montgomery County is currently missing out on the opportunity to participate in this important effort to relieve congestion by cutting down on vehicle trips, reduce carbon emissions, and provide another option for our residents to get to work or run errands, or, just as important, to exercise.

I believe the Bethesda area is particularly well-situated for expanding our bikesharing system. With its high metro ridership<sup>1</sup>, proximity to existing bikeshare stations, and already congested roads, I believe conditions are such that a network of stations would serve our constituents there quite well. In fact, I am aware that the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board recently expressed their interest in bikeshare in a letter to you dated August 8. I have also spoken with members of the Bethesda business community, the Bethesda Urban Partnership, and the Director of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center and all agree that Bethesda would benefit tremendously from bikeshare. In addition, I know you are aware that the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) taking place at the National Naval Medical Center is expected to generate 500,000 new trips to the area. A bikeshare network could provide additional mode share towards mitigating the traffic impacts related to BRAC. Moreover, I believe you share my enthusiasm for the potential of the White Flint area as the recently passed White Flint Sector Plan is implemented. A bikeshare station there could be the missing link

<sup>1</sup> Ridership at the Red Line metro stations in this area – Friendship Heights, Bethesda, and Medical Center – has grown by 71%, 114%, and 94%, respectively, since their openings. Ridership has grown faster at these stations than nearly any of the other metro stations in Montgomery County.

<http://www.wmata.com/pdfs/planning/FINAL%20Transit%20Ridership%20and%20Market%20Trends%20Report.pdf>

between the Bethesda-area network and the stations already going in in Rockville, and fits well with the transit-oriented nature of the redevelopment taking place in White Flint.

As I said, I am aware that DOT staff has previously applied for funding grants that could bring a bikeshare system to the County, and that they recently traveled to Annapolis to discuss Montgomery County's outlook for securing a bikeshare program with state officials and members of the Bethesda community. I am grateful for these efforts. But I believe the time is now to infuse a renewed sense of urgency into our pursuit of a bikeshare system that expands on our successful efforts in securing the pilot program in Rockville and Gaithersburg. You may be aware that Senator Brian Frosh, who represents Bethesda in the Maryland General Assembly, has already expressed his strong support in securing state bond bill funding for such an endeavor. Combined with the growing enthusiasm in the Bethesda community, Senator Frosh's commitment to assist with funding creates a more optimistic outlook for making bikesharing a reality in Montgomery County.

As Chair of the Council's Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy, and Environment (T&E) Committee, I have scheduled a discussion of bikesharing later this fall. In the meantime, I would like to meet with the appropriate members of your staff to discuss strategies for funding and implementing a bikeshare program. These strategies could include, but of course are not limited to, a County match of possible state bond bill funding and/or collaborations with the private sector in some sort of sponsorship model. My hope is that following this meeting or meetings, we will have formulated an executable plan that establishes bikeshare in the Bethesda area in the very near future.

Thank you for your continued interest in this exciting opportunity to serve our residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Roger Berliner", written in a cursive style.

Roger Berliner  
Chair, T&E Committee  
District 1

CC: Senator Brian Frosh  
Valerie Ervin, County Council President  
Nancy Floreen, Member, Council T&E Committee  
Hans Reimer, Member, Council T&E Committee  
Art Holmes, Director, Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
Al Roshdieh, Deputy Director, Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
Sandra Brecher, Chief, Commuter Services, Montgomery County Department of Transportation  
Ken Hartman, Director, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center  
David Dabney, Director, Bethesda Urban Partnership  
Phil Alperson, Montgomery County BRAC Coordinator  
Jeff Hearle, Chair, Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board  
Ginanne Italiano, Chair, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce  
Rollin Stanley, Director, Montgomery County Planning Department  
Françoise Carrier, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board  
Glenn Orlin, Deputy Staff Director, County Council